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FOCUS: Foreign Language Opportunities for Children with Unique Skills

About the project

Foreign language study is becoming increasingly important in education, but for children with learning difficulties it can be an incredibly stressful experience. Some students struggle to learn foreign languages because of their learning difficulties & this has prompted a growing need for solutions to help these students. Research has shown that even individuals who were not previously diagnosed with a learning disability may discover they have one in a foreign language class. Unfortunately, foreign language teachers have not been actively involved in advancing understanding of the challenges of assisting people with learning difficulties who are learning foreign languages.

Language educators recognize that student & classroom is unique & an individualized teaching approach is necessary for optimal learning outcomes.

This is especially critical for children with learning difficulties who may encounter challenges in their native language, impeding their ability to develop language skills like listening, reading, spelling & writing when learning a foreign language.

The project aims to address the following needs:

Lack of knowledge and skills of foreign language teachers for teaching children with learning difficulties

Lack of new and innovative methods for teaching foreign languages to children with learning difficulties

Inclusion of all students in the language learning process

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OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a comprehensive online training program and certificate course to enhance teacher competencies in evidence-based methods for teaching languages to neurodiverse learners and those with special needs.
- Curate an extensive collection of real-world case practices showcasing specific adaptations, technologies, and inclusive instructional approaches for language classrooms. Synthesize key takeaways into standards.
- Design and systematically evaluate interactive language learning games customizable to a wide spectrum of cognitive/physical profiles and processing differences. Quantify engagement and competency gains.
- Increase adoption of inclusive differentiated language instruction models into policy frameworks and professional guidelines. Track impact through policymaker endorsements and district-level changes.
- Raise awareness and increase positive perceptions related to the potential for proficiency among students with learning challenges by highlighting competency gains through regular dissemination.

The above SMART objectives will allow FOCUS to tangibly work towards its aims related to specialized teacher training, actionable standards, adaptive learning tools, changed mindsets and supportive policies – ultimately ensuring access and achievement in world languages for all students.



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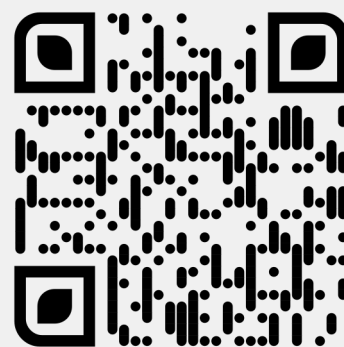
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Project partners



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